(d) The disposal of cases relates to the substantive functioning of the judiciary. The Chief Justice of India has written to the Chief Justices of all the High Courts to identify and dispose of matters pertaining to senior citizens above 65 years of age.

As per available information, most of the High Courts have issued necessary instructions to their Registries as well as courts subordinate to them to dispose of all cases of senior citizens on priority.

Allotment of plots to landless persons

†*415. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have allotted plots to landless persons under 20-point programme;

(b) if so, the number of landless persons to whom plots have been allotted and the number of persons to whom plots are yet to be allotted;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the allottees have not got possession of plots, so far;

(d) if so, the steps Government propose to take to give them possession of the plots; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) to (e) Due to stay granted by the courts against the orders declaring land surplus under the Ceiling Act, there may be cases where allottees could not get possession of plots. Such cases can be

† Original notice of the question was recieved in Hindi.

resolved only after stay is vacated by the courts. In case of dispossession from the plots allotted to landless persons, State Government have to ensure that their possession is restored.

Steps to modernise BALCO

*416. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether production, reserve stock of bauxite and the quality of the final product have considerably reduced as compared to that before disinvestment of Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO);

(b) whether above company had a reserve of about Rs. 300 crores and made a profit of more than Rs. 40 crores when it was privatized;

(c) whether the new management is taking any steps for modernisation of the company;

(d) if so, the details of steps taken in this regard; and

(e) whether Government would reconsider the disinvestment of Bharat Aluminium Company?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The long shut down of the plant due to strike of the employees of BALCO resulting in considerable time taken in restarting and relining of the pots caused enormous loss of production, high operational costs and low purity of metal. According to the BALCO management's estimate, these factors together caused a total loss of over Rs. 200 crore. Information received from the Company indicates that this has not affected the reserve stock of Bauxite which is mined from their Captive Mines or purchased through the State Mining Corporation.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Company has invited bids for modernization of the smelter from reputed technology providers for evaluation.

(e) No, Sir.